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Front Matter/Preface

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The
Thetean

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A Student Journal for
Scholarly Historical Writing

Volume 48 (2019)

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The Thetean is an annual student journal representing the best of historical writing by current and recent students at Brigham Young University. All papers are written, selected, and edited entirely by students. Articles are welcome from students of all majors, provided they are sufficiently historical in focus. Please email submissions as an attached Microsoft Word document to theteansubmissions@gmail.com. Manuscripts must be received by mid-January to be included in that year's issue. Further details about each year's submission requirements, desired genres, and deadlines should be clarified by inquiring of the editors at the same address.

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From the Editor

Preface

IN CONTEMPLATING THE ROLE OF HISTORY IN OUR SOCIETY, A COMMON misconception is that we study history in order to not repeat it. I say misconception because the person who says this forgets the impossibility of history repeating itself—how could it? We are different people with a new culture, living in a unique age, in a specific context, with problems humanity has never faced before. Perhaps a better way of configuring a historian's work, instead of merely looking back to diagnose the mistakes, injustices, and glories of the past and state a prognosis and prescription, rather is to formulate new solutions to the nuances of current realities by interpreting history and renewing it, making it relevant today. This may be why Thucydides, in *The History of the Peloponnesian War*, said that “history is philosophy from examples.”¹ This skill is invaluable not only to those who make history their profession but also to students who seek to better understand people and culture through a historical lens. The *Thetean* celebrates the efforts of undergraduates in the history department, under the guidance and expertise of the faculty, to apply their own perspective to the research they've done, benefiting their own worldview and that of their readers.

We are excited about the variety of subjects featured in this year's volume. Our very own Robert Swanson tells us of the unlikely development of Saudi Arabia after World War I made possible by Ibn Saud, and Ellie Vance describes how the Spanish Influenza affected American families. Abby Ellsworth gives us an interesting look at the public reputations of two female spies of the Civil War and how they reflect the political climate of the time. A few articles explore the stories of various groups of young women—Amy Jacobs discusses the treatment

1. This idea is attributed to Thucydides in Dionysius of Heraclea, *Art of Rhetoric*, II.2.

of young female criminals in the nineteenth century, Cathy Davidson writes about The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints' response to 1960s and 70s counterculture through its teachings to the young women, and Kenzi Christensen studies young girls' involvement in the women's suffrage movement both in the US and in the United Kingdom. As we head over to early twentieth-century Italy, Benjamin Passey challenges how we interpret the policies of Pope Pius XI regarding Mussolini's fascist regime. And finally, Kayla Hofeling examines the late nineteenth-century painter Giovanni Boldini's portrait of Parisian celebrity Cléo de Mérode, capturing the zeitgeist of the Belle Époque through artistic style and technique.

To all the talented people who volunteered their skills to make this volume possible—we thank you. The faculty's influence and mentorship are not quickly forgotten by those who benefit from their wisdom and experience. For that, we thank the faculty members who taught and guided these students to excellence and those who took the time to review these students' work. Dr. Brenden Rensink, our faculty adviser, gave us the support and guidance we needed to continue the honored *Thetean* tradition. I personally give a heartfelt thanks to the *Thetean* editing staff—Emily, Katie, Kelsey, Jake, Maddie, Madeline, Makayla, Miranda, Sarah, and Rob—for their dedication to high quality, their thoughtfulness and skill in working with the authors, and their kindness in patiently working with me amid the busy schedules and tough choices we've made in putting this together.

We invite readers to study these essays with a mind open to reinterpreting today's world, making room for forgotten stories and perspectives never considered before. We hope they use history to step outside themselves and to reevaluate their present worldview in light of the things these authors teach them. Undergraduate students, authors and readers, will eventually leave BYU to start careers and families, and inevitably they will have their own unique problems to solve. The perspectives and skills developed in the history department will be pertinent to how they approach those situations. They will be aware of the vastness of human experience as they apply the past to their own lives to solve new problems, helping others do the same.

—Abigail Crimm
Editor in Chief

