



Penn History Review

Volume 25 | Issue 2

Article 1

4-5-2019

Letter from the Editor

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

On behalf of the editorial board, I am excited to present the newest issue of the *Penn History Review*. Since 1991, the *Penn History Review* has published some of the finest historical research written by undergraduates at the University of Pennsylvania and schools across the United States. Our Fall 2018 edition includes essays that explore diverse subjects such as Chinese legal thought, Jewish refugees, British fashion, and American wartime actions. It was truly a pleasure to review these essays, and I hope that this edition of the *PHR* will prove both intellectually rewarding and enjoyable to read.

In our first piece, *Rule of Law and China's Unequal Treaties: Conceptions of the Rule of Law and Its Role in Chinese International Law and Diplomatic Relations in the Early Twentieth Century*, Mitchell Chan provides a nuanced account of the development of Chinese legal thought. He argues that traditional Chinese conceptions of law presented an obstacle in the nation's ability to negotiate treaties with Europe and America. As a result, foreign countries were able to negotiate treaties with China that granted them significant legal privileges but did not extend the same privileges to the Chinese. In the twentieth century, however, Chinese legal thinkers began to embrace legal reform influenced by foreign ideas about law. Ultimately, the article suggests that the subsequent developments in China's legal thinking allowed the country to eventually renegotiate their unfair treaties with other nations.

The next article, *Interactions Between the Chinese and the Jewish Refugees in Shanghai During World War II*, was written by Qingyang Zhou. The work examines various facets of the relationships that developed between the Chinese and the European Jewish Refugees during World War II. While some Jewish refugees maintained racist notions against the Chinese, the essay points to several examples which illustrate that many of the Chinese and the Jewish refugees accepted one another. Zhou suggests that the friendship between the two cultures thrived because of similarities in Confucianism and Judaism and the absence of Christian anti-Semitism in Chinese culture. Furthermore, both the Jewish refugees and the Chinese were victims of fascist forces; therefore, they were mutually sympathetic,

and many of the Jewish refugees contributed to the Chinese fight against the Japanese.

The third paper, *Utility Futility: Why the Board of Trade's Second World War Clothing Scheme Failed to Become a Fashion Statement*, is from a Dartmouth College student, Amanda Durfee. She examines the reactions to the British Board of Trade's attempts to regulate the price and quality of clothing during World War II. The main goal of the project was to ensure that working class citizens could afford good quality clothing during the war, but it was not simply an economic intervention; rather, the garments that the government produced profoundly affected the future of the British fashion industry. In order to convince women to purchase this clothing, the Board of Trade went so far as to commission British haute couture designers to create their designs. Ultimately, though, the clothing scheme could not shake the negative connotations that British citizens associated with a government-run clothing line.

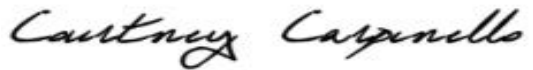
Our final piece, *Skull Questions: The Public Discussion of American Human Trophy Collection During World War II*, was authored by another Dartmouth College student, Walker S. Schneider. He examines the American public discourse in the 1940s surrounding human trophy collecting. While some Americans were horrified by the practice, many blatantly dehumanized the Japanese and viewed human trophy collecting with awe. Schneider suggests that the significance of studying human trophy collecting is that the public's reaction refutes the notion that American civilians were unified in their belief in superior American morality.

The editorial board would also like to thank a number of people without whom this edition of the *PHR* would not have been possible. The Penn History Department continues to generously provide funding and institutional support for our publication. In particular, we are extremely grateful to Dr. Siyen Fei, the Undergraduate Chair of the department, and Dr. Yvonne Fabella, the Associate Director of Undergraduate Studies. They have both offered invaluable advice and encouragement throughout the editing and publishing process. In addition, we would like to thank the faculty members at Penn and other universities who promoted our publication, as well as all of the students who submitted papers for consideration. Thank you as well to our contributing authors, who worked

patiently and diligently to refine their articles for publication.

Finally, I would like to thank our editors for their exceptionally hard work on this issue of the *Penn History Review*. Their dedication and commitment have continued to make the *PHR* a platform for outstanding historical scholarship. It has been a truly enjoyable experience to work with each of them during my time as editor-in-chief. This semester, we are especially fortunate to have added four new editors, Lorenza Colagrossi, Bryce Daniels, Helen Catherine Darby, and William Weiss, who have already made a positive impact on our journal.

Congratulations again to all of the authors and editors who participated in this publication of the *Penn History Review*!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Courtney Carpinello". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first name and last name clearly distinguishable.

Courtney Carpinello
Editor-in-Chief