

# EDITORS NOTE

Welcome to the 7th volume of *The Forum*. Some claim that seven is a lucky number, though I assure you more than luck has made this year's journal one of the best in its short history. Hours upon hours of hard work reading, researching, writing, and editing have gone in to creating what you now hold in your hands. The featured articles this year explore the history of American religious communities, steampunk culture, Western medicine in Malaysia, Cold War ROTC, and American-Zanzibari trade. There truly is something for everyone within these pages.

History itself is an incredibly important area of study, and through it one gets a glimpse of something bigger than his or her self. We get to see people's stories, struggles, and successes. We are all a part of history, whether as subjects, students, or both. Studying history comes from a passion to ask questions with no easy answers. The *Forum* this year, as it has been in past volumes, is a manifestation of that passion which drives us to try to understand people and look for explanations for why things are the way they are; difficult questions, indeed. Yet we pursue them because of our drive to understand. The arguments in the proceeding pages are all from students who are just now beginning to wonder and develop their passion for studying the past.

This journal serves as the embodiment of the motto we live by at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo: Learn By Doing. Our "doing" in history is to investigate and argue. The undergraduate and graduate student articles in this journal are examples of this to the highest degree. I would be hard-pressed to find an embodiment more expressive of Cal Poly's ideal than our journal. I am as proud of this journal as I am of our discipline, for it gives students the opportunity to get their hands dirty (not always just figuratively) and go through the long process it takes to polish a piece of work and have it published. It is a testament to Cal Poly and the History Department as an example of what it means to be passionate about what one does. Few things are more important.

I will say no more, but rather let what follows speak for itself. Enjoy.

Austin J. Due  
*Executive Editor*