

Introduction

This year's volume of *Ibid.: A Student History Journal* features essays on a range of topics that illustrate the human experience. Essays on the development of medieval infrastructure, War time organizations, film, and public health appear alongside intimate portraits of living history. This year's edition also offers essays on how the human experience has been interpreted by historians through the years. Such essays serve as a window into different fields of historical scholarship and are an essential aspect of the historian's quest to develop new truths about the past.

The first essay featured in the 2015 edition of *Ibid.* was presented the Valentine J. Belfiglio Paper Prize. Jillion Crawford-Becker's paper titled "Licking Polio: The Role of the Mass Public in Developing the Vaccine that Would Change the World," discusses the development of the polio vaccine and how various awareness campaigns raised public consciousness about the disease. This essay shows that for the first time, the public had a voice in the world of science and in the improvement of public health.

The second essay, titled "Windsor Castle: The Evolution of the English Fortress and its 21st Century Cultural Significance," also received the Valentine J. Belfiglio Paper Prize. Author, Leah Stanton, provides readers with insight into the development of Windsor Castle over the past millennia, tracking the shift of the Castle's primary use from a defensive fortress to the home of the Royal Family. Stanton furthermore explores the role of the Castle in the 21st century and how through various avenues, including social media outlets, Windsor Castle remains relevant in British culture today.

The third, fourth, and fifth essays were written by participants and winners of the 2015 Living History Community College Essay Contest. The first place essay titled "My First Trip Away from my Mom," authored by Ruby Aguilar, provides insight into the struggles faced by young boy from El Salvador who was sent alone to America by his mother to avoid conscription into guerrilla military forces fighting what is now called The Salvadoran Civil War. The second place essay written by Esmeralda Aguilar and titled "A Child with No Childhood," relates the story of a young girl from Mexico who, because of the financial struggles of her family, gave up her childhood to work for wages to help support her family. The third place essay, written by Danielle Hammond and titled "The Day the World Mourned," recounts the reaction a high school student, attending school in Dallas at the time of the assassination of John F. Kennedy, had to the passing of the President.

The sixth essay, authored by Amanda Romero titled "The MFAA in World War II," examines the role of the Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives

program had in the preservation of European art and culture during World War II. Romero focuses primarily on the significant work of Monuments Men George L. Stout, James Rorimer, Robert Posey, and Frederick Hartt in this mission of cultural preservation.

The seventh essay written by Megan Martin and titled "The Effectiveness of the War Refugee Board in Holocaust Relief," examines the creation of the War Refugee Board and its role in helping victims of the Holocaust. Using statistical data from government reports, Martin shows readers that the War Refugee Board, when the numbers are calculated, was relatively unsuccessful.

The eighth essay titled "True Detective: A Case for Neo-Noir," authored by Alicia Berdan, examines the development of the noir film genre in the aftermath of World War II and tracks how this classical genre and specific form of artistic expression continues to influence the entertainment industry today, using the hit HBO show *True Detective* as a case study.

Essays nine through fourteen comprise a section devoted to examining trends in historiography. The ninth essay, authored by Karen Perkins and titled "The Contributions of Samuel Adams to the American Revolution: A Historiographic Analysis," examines how Samuel Adams and his role in the American Revolution has been viewed by historians, beginning with histories written as early as the late eighteenth century to more recent works from the past decade. Ms. Perkins shows that different political conditions and shifts in professional modes of historical analysis impacted the way Samuel Adams has been portrayed, portrayals that range from heroic founding father to a zealot and propagandist.

The tenth essay, titled "The Treachery of Charles Lee," provides readers with a survey of the scholarship written about Charles Lee, an American Revolution commander who disobeyed the orders of General Washington and was consequently convicted for treason. Author of this essay, Paul J. Burrow finds that early historians condemned Lee as a traitor but later studies on the commander question his conviction and to varying degrees restore Lee as a father of the Revolution.

The eleventh essay, "Nat Turner & His Rebellion," explores historical interpretations of the 1831 slave revolt led by Virginian slave Nat Turner. Author, Devin C. Parhms shows historians have viewed the motivations behind Nat Turner's uprising differently and have disagreed on the impact this rebellion had on the Southern psyche. Earlier historians believed Turner's motivations were primarily religious and that the rebellion had little impact on white Southerners. In contrast, later historians give weight to Nat Turner's rebellion having an impact on Southern consciousness and believe Turner had motivations that were not influenced by religion.

The twelfth essay, written by Patrick Alessandra and titled "The

Causes of World War I," examines scholarship pertaining to the outbreak of war in 1914. Mr. Alessandra finds that earlier scholars tended to blame German and Austro-Hungarian militarism for the war while more recent scholars take a more holistic view and argue that there were many forces that led to the conflict.

The thirteenth essay, titled "Herbert Hoover — A Fallen Hero? Various Perspectives on Underlying Forces for Hoover's Attitudes, Decisions, and Behaviors," explores the reasons historians believe Hoover reacted to the Depression in the way he did and brings to the forefront the historical debate as to whether Hoover was a victim of a difficult economic time or simply a poor politician. Author, Katerina Kvapilova finds that over time historians have found different motivations for Hoover's reaction to the Depression and more recent scholarship has taken a less favorable view on the Hoover.

The next two essays are written on historical interpretations of the use of the atomic bomb as a means to motivate Japanese surrender and end World War II. The fourteenth essay, authored by Abbie Carrier and titled "The Decision to Drop the Bomb," tracks scholarship that examines the question of who ultimately made the decision to use nuclear technology against Japan and why such a decision was made. The fifteenth essay, authored by Melissa G. Thiel and titled "The Dropping of the Atomic Bomb," looks wholly at the reason the bomb was used. Thiel finds that there has been a strand of historical scholarship that maintains that the primary motivation behind the use of the bomb was an American belief in "unconditional surrender," a belief that was underlined by racism.

This year's edition is closed with an essay titled "The Cuban Missile Crisis," authored by Samantha Thornton. Ms. Thornton shows that two camps have developed in the historical scholarship pertaining to the Cuban Missile Crisis. Many historians believe the positioning of missiles in Cuba was a threat the Soviets never intended to fulfill while others believe the firing of the missiles was an imminent and very real danger.

These pages contain new interpretations of the past and allow readers insight into past historical understandings. In reading these pages, we are reminded of the importance of the development of new historical interpretations and are simultaneously shown how such research adds to larger historical debate and discussion. The story of the human experience is not simple and straightforward but rather complex and multifaceted. These

essays highlight the many truths that have been uncovered about the past.
Please enjoy this Eighth Volume of *Ibid: A Student History Journal*.

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