

## Editor's Notes

I am pleased to introduce you to the very first edition of *Constellations: History and Classics Undergraduate Journal*.

The goal of *Constellations* is three-fold. It is to showcase the work of the undergraduate students of history and classics. More importantly, it is an opportunity for undergraduate students to learn about the process of writing, editing, and reviewing for a journal, which will especially benefit those who decide to do graduate work. Finally, it is a forum for students to meet other undergraduates, form friendships and become more involved in the history and classics community.

The Journal's first edition covers a huge variety of topics. The first two articles are classically oriented. The first, "Law and Love: Legal Terminology in Roman Elegy" by Caitlynn Cummings analyzes some of the works of Catullus, Tibullus and Ovid. She argues that legal and contract language was used in love elegies resulting in the conflation of the love and legal spheres. Despite the expectation that legal terminology would result in stilted poetry, these poets used the language to powerful effect. The second article, by Brittany Crockett, examines divorce in ancient Judea. She argues that documents from Elephantine, Egypt, the Papyrus Se-elim 13, and

others suggest that women could obtain a divorce from her husband.

We then will segue into a more archeological focus. Saliha Chattoo provides a fascinating examination of some interpretations of archeological findings that were so influenced by gender bias that the interpretations bordered on ridiculous. Jason Bush then provides us with a detailed analysis of the mysterious roads of the Chaco Canyon of New Mexico.

Katrina Witt begins our last section on European history. She examines the Austria-Hungarian Empire and how it managed its pluralist national makeup for the length of time that it did. Finally, Anthony Burden concludes our first edition of *Constellations*, exploring a different perspective on the German invasion of the U.S.S.R. in 1941. He supports the “Icebreaker Hypothesis,” a theory that is not widely supported, by arguing that Stalin was in fact aware of the possible German invasion but instead chose to ignore the warnings.

*Constellations* has been very well received by the undergraduate student body even in its first year. I hope that this interest and support for this project will continue.

As a final note, you may be wondering where the name *Constellations* came from, after all, astrology is not a particularly prominent feature in the study of history or

classics. The name of the journal comes from a passage in Walter Benjamin's work, *Theses on the Philosophy of History*. He wrote:

"Historicism contents itself with establishing a causal connection between various moments in history. But no fact that is a cause is, for that reason, historical. It became historical post-humously, as it were, through events that may be separated from it by thousands of years. A historian who takes this as his point of departure stops telling the sequence of events like the beads of a rosary. Instead, he grasps the constellations which his own era has formed with a definite earlier one."

I feel that this represents an important part of studying the past in any capacity. The past is not a dull string of events, but a complex and beautifully intricate web of events and possibilities.

Please enjoy reading the diverse topics covered in this edition. I feel they are representative of the many interests among the undergraduates here in the History and Classics Department.

Christina Williamson  
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*Editor of Constellations*