

Editor's Notes

Students are continually challenged by their professors in their undergraduate career with two words: think critically. But what does it mean to think critically? What is wrong with how we currently conceive of the world? In talks with a professor of mine, we described a mutual experience of 'waking' up to the world when we came to university, an experience of gaining a deep awareness of the way we are influenced by ways of thinking and patterns of thought. Marshall McLuhan, a well-recognized Edmonton-born media and political theorist argued for the awakening of the public from its 'somnambulism,' its numbness to the effect the medium exerts.

In the same way, articles presented in this issue challenge you to consider and delve into traditional conceptions and ways of understanding history. This is an exercise never quite completed: it starts with the moment we awake and are confronted with information of any sort. In this issue of *Constellations*, readers are presented with challenges to ways of interpreting, constructing, and delivering history. Emily Lieffers delves into the racial relations and politics of the British empire in the mid-nineteenth century. Heather Gerow studies the construction of ancient history and the use of the Bible as a source. Marie-Christine Jutras considers the fallibility of traditional categorizations of participants in the Holocaust through a film review. Ellen Keith tackles issues of public memory of the Danish rescue of Jews during the Holocaust. Noor Iqbal analyzes the performance and exercise of memory in schools in Remembrance Day ceremonies. All of the authors have,

in some shape or form, tried to think deeply about their chosen subjects and consider *what else* might lie beneath the way history is traditionally conceived and constructed. Taking the tools furnished by professors in our undergraduate careers, we offer a critical and decisive glance, and second glance, into the issues at hand.

We consider history to be a dynamic discipline that is neither dead nor over. It is made right in our hands through the perception of our bodies and analysis of our minds. Just as celestial constellations guide travelers, *Constellations* seeks to help students navigate the process of publication and intellectual exchange. We encourage revision, exchange and discussion of undergraduate papers to refine editing skills and illuminate student research. As historians in the making, the learning process requires us to think creatively and critically. We must consider the body of scholarship around us and the work already done, adding in our own ideas and insights.

Emily Larocque

December 2010

Editor of Constellations