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Santa Clara University’s Phi Alpha Theta chapter publishes a carefully selected group of essays annually for the History Department’s journal, *Historical Perspectives*. These papers are written and edited by students, with the help and advice of the History Department staff and professors, as products of advanced seminars and student conducted original research, representing the highest levels of achievement in the department. This journal reflects the rigor, ingenuity, creativity, and commitment to academic pursuits and the examination of history from varying perspectives by Santa Clara University’s students and the History Department. We received many excellent research paper submissions this year and would like to thank all who submitted papers for review and the faculty members that assisted students with their work. We are very pleased to present to you the 2019 edition of *Historical Perspectives*.

This year’s edition contains predominantly politically focused articles, reflective of the interests and passions of Santa Clara students among an increasingly politically polarizing environment and history courses and seminars offered within the last year, such as Protest and Activism, The Soviet Experiment, and the Progressive Era. Within the theme of politics; however, the essays vary in their focus. Some center on political protest and propaganda while others home in on key historical figures and their political and social effect on history across time and continents. Students analyzed the United States’ history of immigration through varying perspectives and contexts, the intersection of music and civil rights, and the historical politicization of medicine. The papers in this journal range across the political and historical timeline from the careful political examinations of the former Roman emperor, Hadrian, who ruled in the 2nd century AD, to the equally critical and detailed research and analysis of 20th century American political figures, Theodore and Eleanor Roosevelt. The papers presented address elements of *Historical Perspectives*, Series II, Volume XXIII, 2018.
race, gender, religion and especially, identity, throughout various examples of the human experience that we as historians study and examine. While also spanning many countries and time periods, a majority of the articles display a connection between key events in history and current political events and discussions.

Due to the overarching theme of politics included in this edition’s papers, we felt that the cover art for this year’s journal should reflect these sentiments. The piece we chose is a Soviet propaganda poster from Nick Ellis’ paper, “The People’s War: A Chronological Look at the Great Patriotic War Through the Lens of Soviet Propaganda.” The striking image reflects the undertone of propaganda highlighted in many of the papers in the journal.

This year’s contributions to Historical Perspectives demonstrate the critical thinking and analytical skills that our students have developed and polished during their time at Santa Clara University, and their ability to apply these skills to current worldwide issues. Our students recognize and value the connection between the past and the present, understanding the crucial importance of the study of history by analyzing the connections between major events in the past and their current effect, influence and repercussions on the current context. In an age where understanding politics is becoming increasingly critical to engaging with both the past and present, this year’s submissions illustrate the political and historical consciousness that Santa Clara University student’s possess and are constantly striving to improve through their continuous education and exploration of the past, in order to better understand the present.