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Volume XVII of *Historical Perspectives* is the twenty-second journal published by Santa Clara University’s Lambda Upsilon chapter of Phi Alpha Theta. This edition continues the tradition of providing its readers with articles that reflect the caliber of student scholarship at Santa Clara.
Introduction

The Lambda Upsilon chapter of Phi Alpha Theta annually publishes Historical Perspectives, an undergraduate research journal. For twenty-one years, students have submitted their best scholarship to be reviewed by the Historical Perspectives editing committee, a team of students and faculty. This year, we were fortunate to have an exceptional selection of papers to evaluate, reflecting the high level of achievement of Santa Clara University’s history students. We would like to thank all students who submitted essays. The variety of research topics, theoretical approaches, and writing styles illustrate the innovativeness and uniqueness of these pieces.

While the following selection consists of papers that are distinct and cover a variety of geographic regions and eras, the overarching theme of identity unifies them. “We should think of academic freedom,” wrote Edward Said, “as an invitation to give up our obsession with our own identity in the hope of understanding, and perhaps even assuming, more than one.” These eight papers, organized chronologically, each contribute to our understanding of identity’s importance in the study of history. In Christina Forst’s paper dealing with infanticide cases in Victorian England, she discusses the pathologization of mothers who committed infanticide, and how their transgression affected how they were perceived by society. Maxine DeVincenzi also studies the Victorian era, specifically its death culture, and how burial practices helped define the period’s social identity. In her paper “Wicked California,” Michelle Khoury explores how Gold Rush California’s structureless society provided miners the freedom to engage in activities that were widely unaccepted elsewhere, allowing them to form their own identities through leisure. Maggie Woods’ work on World War I propaganda examines the romanticized, false identity of American soldiers in propaganda, which was used as a recruitment tool. In “Tough on Black Asses,”