

Introduction

This volume of *Ibid.* presents six papers, written by both graduate and undergraduate students, which explore a wide variety of historical topics and research methods. The authors utilize different methodologies of historical analysis to highlight the intersections of history, society, and culture. They utilize oral interviews to add context to the Bracero experience; expose discrimination against the German communities of North Texas; analyze the myths surrounding the personal relationships of Michelangelo; discuss the significance of Helmut Kohl in uniting Germany; probe current public debates surrounding Confederate symbols; and finally, examine the intersections of birth control use and first wave feminism in the 19th and 20th centuries.

The first section of essays in this journal demonstrates the use of oral history as a method of contextualizing personal experiences and introducing primary accounts into the larger historical narrative.

The first essay in this section, "My Grandfather, the Bracero," by Paola Alonso, winner of the Valentine J. Belfiglio prize, is an oral history recounting the personal experiences of former Bracero, Evaristo Guerrero Sierra. Using interviews from the Bracero History Archive, Alonso places Evaristo's narrative as a contracted laborer within the varied experiences of other Braceros. Additionally, Alonso examines the larger history of the Bracero Program and the ways it impacted the relationship between Mexico and the United States through a cultural, economic, and political lens.

The second essay in this section, "Discrimination Against North Texas German Catholics during WWI and WWII," by Caitlin Turbeville, winner of the Valentine J. Belfiglio prize, analyzes increases in discrimination against various German communities in North Texas coinciding with the World Wars. Through her use of primary sources and analysis of local North Texas history, Turbeville recounts the first-hand experiences of Germans in Texas, conveying the ways they struggled to fully embrace their culture, heritage, and religion amid growing animosity.

The second group of essays presents topics regarding European history. Both essays in this section address the significance and impact of European figures and the narratives surrounding them.

The first essay in this section, "Helmut Kohl: The Chancellor who United Germany," by Angelique Sohn, examines the impact of Chancellor Helmut Kohl and his political efforts to unite Germany after decades of division. Sohn's use of newspaper articles, political treaties, Kohl's memoirs, and comments of those around him portray

the difficulties and opposition Kohl faced during the implementation of his Ten-Point-Plan. Ultimately, Sohn argues that Kohl's strategies significantly contributed to the realization of his plan and succeeded in reunifying Germany.

The second essay, "Book Review of *Michaelangelo and the Pope's Ceiling* By Ross King," by Caitlin Turbeville, analyzes the historical relevance of Ross King's book, which demythologizes the historical assumption that Renaissance artist, Michaelangelo, worked alone on the Sistine Chapel. King argues that Michaelangelo's friends, family, assistants, and enemies had a vital role in assisting Michaelangelo in his artistic career. Turbeville analyzes King's arguments and his use of evidence in making this claim.

The last section of essays proves the ways in which history continues to remain relevant in the present-day. The authors examine ways in which events and figures of the past continue to influence modern life and demonstrate the impact of history on current issues.

The first essay in this section, "'As It Should be Told': The Denton Confederate Soldier and Public Memory," by Hunter Vermeer, explores the history of the United Daughters of the Confederacy's movement to erect Confederate monuments and the prominence of the "Lost Cause" mythology in the debate surrounding the public display of Confederate monuments. Citing arguments from multiple perspectives, Vermeer centers the debate in the sociopolitical context of the past and present.

The last essay, "Birth Control and First Wave Feminism," by Abigail Raebig, evaluates the connections between the use of birth control and the principle of women's autonomy as it relates to the first wave of feminism during the 19th and early 20th centuries. Raebig discusses the diverse family planning options that women used to remain in control of their own bodies and how these methods were affected by political and social factors over time. Despite various policies restricting access to family planning methods, Raebig argues that the feminist movement empowered women to fight back against these restrictions and demand opportunities for reproductive education and bodily autonomy.