

Introduction

In the twelfth edition of *Ibid.: A Student History Journal*, thirteen authors, from freshmen to graduate students, present their research on a broad selection of historical themes. The authors dissect the available primary sources to uncover the often obscured histories relating to women, black communities, gender identity, and minority religions from the thirteenth century to the 1970s; they examine the interpretations of twentieth-century historians to determine how attitudes and approaches in different matters of political history evolved over time; and they explore the impact and developments of culturally significant artforms ranging from Jacobean theatre and early twentieth-century literature to comic books and 1970s rock-and-roll.

In the first group of essays, the authors utilize primary and secondary sources to investigate social, political, and cultural questions on historical subjects from thirteenth-century England to twentieth-century Dallas, Texas.

The first essay appearing in the 2019 edition of *Ibid.* is “Roads to Destruction: Postwar Urban Redevelopment and North Dallas Freedman’s Town,” by Cynthia Lewis. Winner of the Valentine J. Belfiglio Paper Prize, this essay is an enlightening case study that demonstrates the tendency of urban renewal projects to produce detrimental effects for poor and minority communities. Lewis assembles a wealth of primary and secondary source material in her logically developed argument to show how the residential segregation confronted by a historically black community of North Dallas led to slum conditions that were only made worse by the postwar slum clearance projects it prompted. Her work highlights the importance of one of the oldest black neighborhoods in Dallas—formerly Freedman’s Town—not only to its residents, but to blacks who lived outside of Dallas as well.

The second essay, “Jews in Thirteenth Century England,” written by Ashton Brackett, examines the deteriorating status of the Jewish community in England from the reigns of Richard I to Edward I. Brackett uses an extensive variety of secondary sources and primary sources to show how a decline in royal support and religious tensions with the Christian majority—exacerbated by the prevailing spirit of the crusades and intensifying economic resentments—created an environment in which the Jewish community faced increasing persecution, abuse, and injustice. Brackett’s essay reveals the duplicity of a monarchy that repeatedly profited from high taxes on Jews, yet ultimately chose to issue the Edict of Expulsion after the sanctioning of Christian moneylending essentially ended the crown’s reliance on Jewish capital.

The third essay analyses the links between the works of William Shakespeare and masque playwright Ben Jonson in late sixteenth- to early seventeenth-century English theater. In “Jacobean Masque Theater and Shakespeare’s ‘The Tempest’: The Foil of the Anti-Masque,” Joy Siler probes the works of the two writers to uncover elements that indicate the cultural influence of each in the other’s work. Siler finds suggestions that Jonson’s anti-masque concept and elaborate costume designs—found in his piece *The Masque of Queens*—influenced Shakespeare’s formulation of *The Tempest*. Siler’s essay offers an education on the intricacies of Jacobean theater, drawing attention to the cultural exchange between upper-class society, whose attributes informed the masques, and the subsequent influence the plays had on nobles as they functioned as instruments to justify and defend the sovereignty of the crown.

The next group of essays features a selection of works focused on the lives of women. Though women’s history is routinely undermined by a lack of source material and past historians’ inclination to disregard their experiences, these authors provide rich accounts of women that expand our understanding of the diverse environments, lifestyles, and choices, encountered by women of the past.

The first essay in this section, “Propriety Meets Necessity: Female Nursing in the Civil War,” written by Hunter Vermeer, is a recipient of the Valentine J. Belfiglio Paper Prize. In this paper, Vermeer compares Union and Confederate nursing organizations, revealing the many ways in which the two differed, but focusing on the traits shared by female nurses regardless of their region. He discerns and examines three similarities, the fact that extreme demand initially allowed women the opportunity to contribute to the war effort as nurses, the shared concerns about female propriety that prompted women on both sides to employ antebellum ideas about femininity to justify the practice, and the presence of a large number of African-American women in the nursing organizations. Vermeer concludes that the war, facilitated by the women’s organizational proficiency and deft navigation through controversy, provided a substantial step forward for women in medicine.

The next essay examines a group of women who found a different way to participate in the war effort. “They Went as Men,” written by Brandi Gray-Blake, relates the stories of three women who dressed in men’s clothing in order to fight as soldiers in the Civil War. Using letters written by the women and secondhand accounts of their lives, the author is able to shed light on an embryonic gender-nonconforming community that gained a modicum of acceptance in society. Gray-Blake’s paper gives

these women credit for having the courage to live candidly, making choices that expressed their authentic identities.

Third in this group, “The Support Networks of Mormon Women in the Nineteenth-Century West,” by Morgan Jones, explores the family and social lives of Mormon women in polygamous marriages on the American frontier. Despite the controversy, Jones argues that these arrangements were often a positive source of practical support and emotional comfort for the sister wives. Additionally, Jones reveals how the close-knit structure of their communities offered Mormon women an advantage over other pioneering women as support from the church and its associated organizations fostered the ability to establish strong communities that could withstand outside persecution.

The last essay in the women’s history group has a similar focus on the experiences of women settling on the American frontier. In “Elva Queen: A Genealogical Study of Homesteading Women,” Melissa Queen tells the story of a recently uncovered past relative whose memory nearly faced complete obliteration in the family history. Queen utilizes oral history interviews, census records, and primary source materials from female contemporaries to restore Elva’s life to the record of family memory and to highlight a story of a homesteading woman of a lower socioeconomic status whose life seems incompatible with the more commonly cited advances made by middle- to upper-class women’s rights activists in discussions of women during this time period.

This edition of *Ibid.* introduces a new category designated for works of historiographical research. In these essays, the authors analyze elements of historical thought surrounding specific subjects. Drawing from historians who may differ in such terms as time, approach, identity, or region, historiographies reveal the variability of interpretations from one study to the next, providing important insights that broaden our understanding of the past.

The first work in this section, “Liberal Without a Cause: Understandings of Kennedy’s Historic Purpose,” is a recipient of the Valentine J. Belfiglio Paper Prize. Written by Kasie Moffett, the essay examines five books that use different approaches in their study of the Kennedy administration. Moffett demonstrates the evolution of historians’ portrayal of Kennedy over time, as well the differing—often contradictory—interpretations that arise when historians approach their study with a distinctive focus on aspects like “psychohistory,” masculinity, civil rights, and ideology. Despite the clear differences, Moffett finds that each author shares a preoccupation with

deciphering how Americans in the sixties perceived Kennedy and how the historic purpose of his presidency should be remembered in the future; the inconclusive answers reveal how much he continues to function as an idea, while Kennedy as a person remains as nebulous as ever.

The second historiographical study comes from Philip Smith. In "Seeing Red: A Historiographical Study of the American Communist Movement During the Interwar Period," Smith tracks the historical interpretations of the Communist Party of the United States to show the shifting portrayal of the party as historians began reevaluating its negative reputation in the country. This essay provides illuminating descriptions of the different methodologies used in each of the books, making it a valuable aid for understanding how diverse approaches affect historical studies. Smith analyses books that use empiricist, gender, oral history, Marxist, and ethnohistory methodologies to demonstrate each approach's strengths and weaknesses, and to show how the image of the party improved over time.

The last section of the twelfth edition features another new category for the journal: historical research written by first-year students. By Saul Ruvalcaba, the essay "Origins of *Batman's* Joker" takes the reader through the complicated timeline of the villain's first appearances and backstories in the *Batman* comic books. Lidia Rubio's essay, "Popular Reactions to Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle*," explores the conditions of the meatpacking industry before and after the publication of Sinclair's famous exposé and attempts to determine the public's reaction to the book. The essay "Psychedelic Drugs and the Fine Arts in the 1960s and 1970s" by Ashley Park takes a look at the impact drugs like LSD had on the works of painters, musicians, and poster artists. Finally, Daesia Nisbett reviews the book *The Hidden History of the JFK Assassination* by Lamar Waldron in the last essay of the journal.

This year's essays continue *Ibid.*'s proud tradition of celebrating student scholarship. From first-year essays to work excerpted from graduate theses, the twelfth volume demonstrates a breadth of authorial talent and skill. We hope that you enjoy reading the essays as much as we did!

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