

Report

West Point Undergraduate Historical Review



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ABOUT THE REPORT

Report is a non-profit publication produced by undergraduate cadets at the United States Military Academy. It accepts and encourages submissions from undergraduates in the fall and spring. Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission is prohibited.

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LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

I am pleased and honored to introduce this year's edition of *Report*. Our team has worked over breaks and through semesters of intense academic rigor to stitch together the work you are about to read. Under our Dean, Brigadier General Shane Reeves's theme "**Innovation, Technology, and the Future of National Defense**," *Report* reached out to all the military academies, as well as many other prestigious civilian academic institutions to acquire outstanding historical research.

Historiography has taken a turn to better understand not just how and why certain events occurred, but also how they are interpreted, remembered, and incorporated in a group's sense of self. As an institution dedicated to educating, training, and inspiring the next generation of our country's leaders of character, the United States Military Academy engages this important and incredibly complex direction of history with zeal. We are excited to introduce you to a wide variety of works that highlight how innovations of style, artwork, technology, and leadership contribute to society and how lessons from these important historical questions can better prepare us for the future of national defense.

Our journal consists of eight works selected for their innovation, skill in written communication, and depth of historical research. Starting with a fascinating piece on the prevalence of artificial intelligence in the history community, Connor Kaufmann takes a case study of the Mau Mau uprising and compares it to an AI generated essay, showing both creativity in method and analysis as scholars enter the next phase of the information revolution. Within the same theme, we have a submission from Lucas Schwed on historical revisionism and how it affects the dialogue of our past.

Next are two analyses of leadership and decision making. Reece Pockat explores how military and political indecision created numerous failures in Vietnam from 1958-1965. While Reece shows moments of failure, Alec Wells's analysis of George Thomas's leadership at Chickamauga highlights the exceptional leadership required for victory and provides insight for future officers who will contribute to our nations' defense. Equally important as the leadership driving the policies and strategy for conflict are the soldiers who carry it out.

Two articles then delve into symbolism and visual representation. Devon Smith introduces how the American Catholic population contributed to World War One with an in-depth analysis of newspapers and images taken of various symbols of faith in a time and place surrounded by fear and death. Angela Wang discusses the diminishing role of visual representation in the early-modern Americas and analyzes how artistic choices helped shape societal perspectives of a world many would not be able to witness.

Finally, two articles bring into focus the complex relationship between bias, memory, and action. Chloe Morton's article on antisemitism in the Soviet Partisan Movement explores how perception shaped action against the Jewish population in the Soviet Union. Riley Neubauer then shows how a group *isn't* portrayed or remembered can also be a fascinating and intriguing historical question by exploring the memory of Seneca Village, which once stood where Central Park resides in New York City, bringing a minority group and their home back to life by following the efforts to remember and contextualize it years after its questionable removal.

These papers reiterate not only the importance, but the vastness of history. They demonstrate the beauty of asking questions, and the joys of finding answers through research. Their work allows us to ponder how innovation, leadership, identity, and memory shape our understanding of the world and invite us to pursue answers. I am extremely grateful for the support of our staff and faculty making this all possible and am excited to share these works with you!

Sapientia per Historiam!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Devon Smith". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent 'D' and 'S'.

CDT Devon Smith
USMA Class of 2024
Report Senior Editor

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