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Letter from Editorial Board

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LETTER FROM THE EDITORIAL BOARD

Dear Readers:

Just four years ago, *The Hilltop Review* was launched—albeit solely in electronic form—as a venue for showcasing the excellent research undertaken by graduate students at Western Michigan University. Such a publication venue is crucial for graduate students; while we can hone our analytical skills in seminars and demonstrate our teaching skills in our classrooms, we also need a forum in which to show the greater WMU community the fruits of our own projects and original research. Thus, we are proud to re-launch *The Hilltop Review*, and to re-introduce this publication to WMU's graduate students, the faculty and staff of Western Michigan University, and the greater Kalamazoo community. This semester's issue features an interdisciplinary array of original student work that is a strong reflection of WMU's commitment to supporting graduate education throughout its 110 graduate degree programs.

Significantly, the papers presented here characterize the variety of disciplines in which WMU graduate students work, teach, and conduct original research. From the Department of English, Gregory Laing offers an insightful commentary on the incidence and implications of treason and betrayal in medieval Arthurian romances. From the Department of Computer Science, Sahil Behl and Leszek Lilien, Ph.D., discuss and provide a solution for our need for enhanced methods of electronic privacy preservation. From the Department of Political Science, Matthew Arsenault addresses the efficacy of formal governmental intervention in sectarian protests. From the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, Hanyi Dai offers solutions for programming groups of robots to cooperatively perform tasks. From the Department of History, Jack Goodman comments on the interpretive possibilities and perils associated with the analysis of a fourteenth-century legal document. We are also proud to feature the artwork of Brandon Dellario and Alessandra Santos Pye, from the School of Social Work and the Department of Counselor Education and Counseling Psychology, respectively.

We encouraged submissions from all departments, then called on WMU faculty and graduate students from each department to lend their expertise in reviewing and offering commentary on their peers'

research.

This publication would have been impossible had we not had the help of many individuals from the WMU community. Brandi Pritchett, chairperson of GSAC, has been an energizing force behind the project even before we came on board; so too we thank GSAC for funding and standing behind this journal since its inception in 2005. We thank Dr. Tim Greene, Provost; Dr. Lewis Pyenson, Dean of the Graduate College; and Dr. John Dunn, University President, for their continued support of graduate research and education. We would also like to thank the WMU department and program heads who encouraged their faculty and students to participate in this project, whether by submitting work for evaluation, or evaluating submissions for publication.

Finally, we would like to acknowledge the strong field of submissions we received from our graduate colleagues this semester. The quality of the papers we reviewed speaks to the professional and collegial nature of the work we do at this university. We are honored to work with such a talented group of student-authors, and this journal testifies to the academic and artistic achievement and promise of our graduate students. We are thrilled to re-introduce *The Hilltop Review* to the WMU community. We hope that it continues to highlight the research of our colleagues for years to come.

Sincerely,

Lotfi Ben Othmane
Editor

Christina Triezenberg
Associate Editor

Ilse Schweitzer
Associate Editor