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Notes from the Editor

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NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

Dear readers,

I am delighted to present the spring 2019 issue of *The Hilltop Review*. In keeping with the journal's interdisciplinary mission, the articles, creative writing, and artwork in this issue reflect many of the diverse projects of Western Michigan University's graduate students. Congratulations are especially due to the winners of this issue's awards. David D. Terry will receive \$500 for the paper "Pirates, Merchants, and a Small Battle on the Island of Kythira in the Later Middle Ages;" Amanda Devoto and Anthony DeFulio will share \$250 for their paper "Acceptability of Social Media Incentives to Increase Physical Activity;" and Kaila K. Graham will receive \$150 for "Erasure on All Sides: A Public Health Analysis of Mental Health Disparities Experienced by Bisexual Individuals." For creative work, Grant Haynes will receive \$250 for the photograph "Smoke over Lake McDonald" and Kailyn J. Dekker will receive \$250 for a collection of poems and microfiction. We are also pleased to include Meghan Campbell's "Religious Nonviolence: An Analysis of Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr., and Thich Nhat Hanh," which won the Graduate Humanities Conference award for best paper.

The Hilltop Review is funded by graduate students for their express benefit. At a time when many students in our community are facing acute needs—health care; rampant debt; difficulty in finding employment; fear for personal and familial safety—one might question the value of funding an interdisciplinary graduate student journal. After directing and editing *The Hilltop Review* for the 2018-19 academic year, I am still not sure how to answer the difficult challenge of how our Graduate Student Association should balance all these competing goods. I am leaving my position, though, confident of two things. First, addressing this challenge well requires an active Graduate Student Association body whose interests and needs reflect the diverse lives of our graduate student community. Second, *The Hilltop Review* has had and can continue to have a much more profound impact on graduate student life than some additional lines on a few dozen C.V.s and resumes, as each issue of *The Hilltop* is published online through ScholarWorks at WMU, an online repository available to and accessed by over a million users each year. Thus, with each publication of excellent scholarship from our graduate student body, the name and reputation of our scholarly community grows across the world. And while these effects are often not readily apparent in our daily lives at WMU, I have grown firm in the belief that they do make a difference.

As the director and editor of this journal, I have had a terrific opportunity to experience just how brilliant, supportive, and kind Western Michigan University's graduate students can be. First, I would like to thank all the editorial board members and peer reviewers I have worked with for volunteering their time and intellectual resources to *The Hilltop Review*. I am especially grateful to the incoming director and editor of *The Hilltop*, Alex Hoffmann, for his help and patience in cultivating a smooth transition in journal leadership. Finally, I wish to thank the 2018-19 Graduate Student Association executive board for their continued support of our journal's mission.

Sincerely,

Adam Waggoner