

Letter from the Editor

Dear Reader,

It is my absolute pleasure to introduce the nineteenth volume of *On Politics*. This volume is not simply a compilation of undergraduate scholarship, but proof that student voices play an active role in the understanding and critical reflection of the political world. This particular volume displays the broad range of political scholarship by showcasing six different undergraduate voices.

This volume starts with Hanna Solis Perusquia's examination of the US-Mexico border and how its enforcement apparatus violently fractures transnational migrant families. Hanna's work traces the structural roots of Central American displacement, including US foreign intervention and neoliberal economic reform, before analyzing how policies such as the Migrant Protection Protocols and Title 42 have institutionalized family separation.

Then, we go to Natasha Heywood's research on why the process of treaties was executed differently in British Columbia (BC) compared to the rest of the West; i.e., why did BC not negotiate any more treaties after 1854? Natasha seeks to understand why BC made the decisions it did historically, which placed it at odds with the rest of Western Canada.

Next, we have Maria Diana Calara's study of how France's luxury prominence should be understood within a broader export economy marked by uneven manufacturing competitiveness. Maria presents the argument that France's luxury prominence is best understood as the product of historical cultural capital, firm-level strategy, and selective state support rather than a singular, coherent

state-led export strategy.

Afterwards, we present Grace Mercer's exploration of the dual dynamics that have impacted the development of Japanese nationalism, as well as the rise in Japanese neo-nationalism that can be seen today. By contextualizing Japanese nationalism with respect to the overlapping impact of Eastern and Western forces, the writing offers a more robust examination of how nationalism in Japan has been constructed over time.

Then, Claire Beatty talks about the erosion of press freedom in India and its implications on the media's democratic role. While the press is expected to function as a watchdog by holding the government accountable, informing citizens, and facilitating public debate, this role is increasingly constrained. Overall, Claire explores why the media's capacity to act as an effective watchdog for democracy has been limited, as India's case reflects broader global pressures on media institutions, raising concern about the future of democratic accountability.

Finally, this volume presents Kaya Dupuis' work about wartime sexual violence and how it is systematically under theorized in both realist international relations (IR) and mainstream feminist IR frameworks. Additionally, realism's state-centric lens renders gendered violence invisible, while universal feminist approaches fail to account for the complex interactions of race, class, displacement and postcolonial history that shape women's lived experiences of sexual violence. Kaya argues that an intersectional feminist perspective, applied through a multifactorial analytical framework, more adequately addresses wartime rape as a deliberate weapon of war.

This was my first issue as Editor-in-Chief of *On Politics*, and it has been an unforgettable experience. The opportunity to work with the talented editorial team

and collaborate with the authors and their writing has been an honour. This volume would not have been possible without the tremendous work of everyone involved. I would like to thank the editors, proofreaders, authors and other members of the Political Science Department for making this volume possible.

The insightful themes that are examined in this issue are a reflection of the world we live in today, and keeping this in mind, please enjoy the nineteenth volume of *On Politics*.

Thomas Park
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