Editorial

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*History Initiates* publishes outstanding undergraduate essays produced in the Department of Modern History at Macquarie University.

Original research is the hallmark of the academic historian and as such we encourage students, as they progress through their historical studies, to explore their own research projects. This primarily occurs at 300-level and beyond, extending on students’ earlier work in developing arguments, collating secondary research, weighing evidence and so on. In developing their own projects students must identify a historical problem or question of significance, scope the scale of the project, and creatively identify, accumulate and interpret sources in order to provide an explanation for the issues posed.

In this edition of *History Initiates*, Alison Brooks explores the intersection between class politics and punk rock in Britain and the United States in the 1970s; Nathan Fallon undertakes an aesthetic critique of Italian architecture under Mussolini during the second quarter of the twentieth century; Jeremy Mayes uses the (great, timeless and superbly acted) film, *Back to the Future*, as an avenue for examining narratives of moral decline and the rise of the New Right in the United States during the 1980s; Lisa O’Brien draws on Ada Gobetti’s diary and a range of secondary sources to analyse Italian female resistance groups during the Second World War; and Lianne Tan delves into the masculine social milieu of the beat generation to consider the ways in which key figures of the movement constructed and understood gender in post-war America.

The wide range of topics tackled here is a reflection of the quality and breadth of scholarship being produced by students within the Modern History department. We are proud to publish their work in this edition of the journal.