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HISTORY DEPARTMENT



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Western Connecticut State College  
Vol. III, Number 2

March, 1976

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## EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

An event that generated as much raw emotionalism as World War II creates almost insurmountable obstacles to objective historical study. Indeed, all thought tends to be polarized and the years immediately following the event perpetuate our inability to look on the event with the cold light of reason. As Arthur Schlesinger noted in his book The Crisis of the Old Order: "We are always in a zone of imperfect visibility so far as the history just over our shoulder is concerned. It is as if we were in the hollow of the historical wave; not until we reach the crest of the next one can we look back and estimate properly what went on before."

Serious contemplation of World War II will never cease to provide moral lessons. Certainly our contemplation of the poor corporal who dreamt madly of being a great general should always serve to remind us that those who shunt away basic human priorities determine their own kind of horrendous doom. But once we have noted these moral lessons then we must strive to uncover those lessons from the past that will help us forge the future. The 'crest' of historical reckoning of World War II has arrived and these articles exemplify some new thinking on the era.

The first article by Caroline Salvati, one of our history Seniors, focuses on the Reichstag fire in an effort to understand the methods used by Hitler to gain control of Germany. Dr. Herbert Janick needs no introduction to the history majors who witness his perpetual rushing to satisfy student needs; he serves as Chairman of the History Department, and helps the History Club. His article explores a particular aesthetic judgment by the Nazis. John Gogliettino, a graduate history student, probes the causes for Germany's losing the war. The article on the French resistance to German rule comes from the pen of Diana Healy who is presently a Junior history major. Dr. John Leopold, the faculty advisor to Phi Alpha Theta, the History Honor Society, has contributed a review of recent German historiography.

The cover photographs come from two sources. The picture of the Woodrow Wilson statue is from the Gutzon Borglum Papers in the Library of Congress. The geographic montage with photos is taken from Eyes of the World (1934) as is the David Low cartoon on the inside cover.