

27 August 2017

Dear Reader,

Five years ago, a group of Holy Cross students began assembling the first edition of this journal. In the years since, a small editorial board has continued to produce a new edition each year. These pages have become a reliable feature of the life of Fenwick 4: copies are presented to prospective students; faculty encourage their classes to submit papers; and each year, a new team of editors eagerly awaits the new issue. This journal has attained a dependable place in the life of our department – even if a less-than-diligent editor delays publication by many months.

When we assess submissions each February, the Board relies on two metrics. First, we assess intellectual or artistic quality, seeking out pieces which are characterized by rigorous analysis, clearly written, and offer some real insight into the Classical world and its reception. In recent years, we have considered a second metric, accessibility. Towards this end, we have tried to include poetry, short essays, and papers adapted to a more general audience – the sort of submissions which people with little knowledge of the Classical world might find engaging or thought-provoking. In the past few years, the best submissions have possessed both of these qualities; firmly rooted in the Classical world, they have managed to speak both to lasting human truths as well as to contemporary interests and concerns. The task of the Editorial Board has been to solicit and include submissions which possess both of these qualities. The following pages, I think, attest to how brilliantly they have succeeded.

When I thumb through old volumes of *Parnassus* (usually after midnight in the Fitzgerald Library, in dread of a looming exam), I am frequently struck by how the concerns of a particular moment bleed into the works of our contributors. This edition's preoccupation with rhetorical historical narrative, and political satire illustrate this tendency. It is no surprise that we, as writers and editors, often grapple with ancient texts in terms of contemporary problems. On reflection, it seems that this is one of the great strengths of our discipline.

The German scholar Friedrich August Wolf is said to have defined “Philology” as “knowledge of human nature as exhibited in antiquity.” Although not all of us will accept that definition, these pages attest to its enduring value. This discipline and the things we say about it offer a unique lens for understanding the present. On Mount St. James, *Parnassus* gives voice to that insight. A lofty description, indeed, and one that we may not always fulfill. At the very least, it is a goal to be obtained.

With that said, I must offer my thanks to all members of the Editorial Board, whose work this issue is. The now long-delayed publication of this journal in no way reflects their efforts. To the contrary, their work, particularly that of our deputy editor, is solely responsible for moving Volume V off of the editor’s hard drive and into print. With profound gratitude both to them and to our patient contributors, it is my honor to present this issue. I hope you enjoy the reading as much as I did.

Claude Hanley, ’18  
Editor-in-Chief