

Introduction

This year marks the tenth issue of the *Alexandrian*, the journal for student research in history and philosophy at Troy University. Yes, it was ten years ago that history major Doug Allen returned from a Phi Alpha Theta (PAT) conference with the idea to edit and publish a journal to exhibit the research and writing talents of the department's finest students. PAT faculty advisor Dr. Karen Ross and Doug invited students with a scholarly bent to experience writing and editing individual papers as well as compiling and publishing the magazine. The first volume, published in 2012, contained four articles and a book review. Four faculty associate editors and four student assistant editors supported co-editors, Dr. Ross and Doug Allen, plus technological editor, Tim Winters.¹

Now, at the time I thought this was a very commendable project, and I fully expected that like so many similar efforts produced by so many university departments across the nation, this one, too, would result a single worthy publication, and that would be that. But then, in 2013 Dr. Ross and students began work on a second issue. Volume two appeared, followed by volume three, and then volume four, and so on. With publication of a tenth volume, it stands to reason that the *Alexandrian* has become a testament to the enduring nature of inquisitiveness, inquiry, and exposition that our department's students consistently demonstrate. The *Alexandrian* also symbolizes the lastingness of commitment that our department's faculty invests towards the academic and professional success of our students. *The Alexandrian* embodies Troy University's motto and mission, "to educate the mind to think, the heart to feel, the body to act."

Unquestionably, the continuance of this student journal is to be credited to the person at the helm, Dr. Karen Ross, who yearly provides students with a golden opportunity to publish, and who yearly reminds faculty of their promises to read and reread and edit. I and all the faculty gratefully acknowledge Karen for her enduring dedication to this ongoing enterprise. Also significant to successive volumes of the *Alexandrian* has been the unwavering support of Sandra and Steve Alexander, parents of Professor Nathan Alexander, for whom this series is named. I and the faculty sincerely appreciate the generous donations and the accompanying heartfelt letters Sandra and Steve have provided throughout the past decade to sustain this endeavor. There is much grace in their loving tribute to their son.

Finally, in addition to Karen and the Alexanders and others' involvements, I strongly suspect there is an ethereal element to the journal's persistence. As mentioned, the *Alexandrian's* namesake is Nathan Alexander, Troy University history professor who died in May 2009 not two months after his forty-first birthday. Nathan was not only a historian, but a polymath. He read voraciously and broadly. Whenever one spoke with him, no matter the topic, he usually suggested a book he had read that one ought to consider looking at. Nathan would have had something meaningful to contribute for each of this journal's authors to better understand the subject of the article they were writing. Indeed, I like to think that Nathan has been dropping hints all along to the students and professors contributing to this work. Nathan was a nuanced thinker; he possessed

¹ For more on former editor and Troy graduate, Doug Allen, see page 55.

the rare ability to reasonably consider many sides of any matter that was up for debate. Those of us who had the honor to know him delighted in the occasional, wonderful quirkiness of Nathan's interests. (Once he proudly presented me a book about Brigitte Bardot!) At the same time, we appreciated, and still do, his liberality and wisdom. Although he is no longer physically here, Nathan's loving spirit remains present as evidenced by the latest edition of the *Alexandrian*. His was a passion for knowledge so bountiful, death cannot erase it.

Congratulations to every individual who has contributed to ten years of the *Alexandrian*!

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Dedication

This tenth volume of the Troy University Department of History and Philosophy's *Alexandrian* is dedicated in loving memory of Sandra Alexander, mother of Nathan Alexander.